

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-14 and 16-24 are now pending in this application, among which Claim 22 stands allowed. Claims 1, 9, 13, 18, and 21 have been amended. Claims 23-24 have been added. The amendments find full support in the original specification, claims, and drawings. No new matter has been added. In view of the above amendments and remarks that follow, reconsideration and an early indication of allowance of claims 1-14 and 16-24 are respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejects claims 1, 3, 12-14, 16, 20, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Bremer (U.S. Patent No. 6,032,190). Claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 11, 17, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Bremer in view of either Demange (U.S. Patent No. 5,355,522), Hebb (U.S. Patent No. 6,320,864), or other allegedly admitted prior art. Claims 6, 8-10, and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but are deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1 and 13 have been amended to include the limitation of claims 9 and 18, respectively, that the recited second stage queue stores packet-related data from the first stage queue "based on a characteristic of the packet." Claim 21 has also been amended to recite a "means for storing in a second stage queue associated with each determined destination port the packet-related data from the first stage queue based on a

characteristic of a packet." As the Examiner has indicated with respect to claims 9 and 18, none of the cited references teach or suggest this limitation. Accordingly, claims 1, 13, and 21 are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 11, 17, and 19 are also in condition for allowance because they depend on an allowable base claim and for the additional limitations that they contain.

Claims 23 and 24 are new in this application. Claims 23 and 24 are allowable because they depend on claim 22, which the Examiner has indicated is in condition for allowance, and for the additional limitations that they contain.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests an early indication of allowance of Claims 1-14 and 16-24.

CONCLUSION

For all the above reasons, Applicant submits that Claims 1-14 and 16-24 are patentably distinguishable over the above-cited art and Claims 1-14 and 16-24 are in proper form. Therefore, the amendment to claims being fully responsive to Examiner's Final Action, Applicant submits that this application is now in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully solicited.

With the addition of two additional dependent claims, Applicant submits \$36 in addition to the RCE fee of \$750 as a check in the amount of \$786. Should additional fees be required in the continued prosecution of this application, the USPTO is authorized to charge the additional fees to the deposit account of Michael B. Brooks, account no. 02-3979.

Respectfully submitted,



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